



Sir Edwin Landseer, R.A. (1802-1873) *Study of a Llama*, inscribed, pencil 17 x 11cm, and another; *A Group of Deer in a Wood*, pen and brown ink and brown wash, 9.8 x 16.8cm. (2) *Sworders, Stansted Mountfichet*. Sep 07. HP: £2,300. ABP: £2,705.



Walter Langley (1852-1922) *The Fisher-Boy*, signed W. Langley bottom left, signed and inscribed with title and artist's address Westbourne-Alexandria, Penzance on a label attached to backboard, oil on board, 22 x 11.5cm. Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £5,500. ABP: £6,469.



George Goodwin Kilburne, watercolour, *Cottage Interior with Young Woman writing a Letter*, signed, 7.5 x 10.25in, gilt frame. Hartleys, Ilkley. Oct 07. HP: £4,400. ABP: £5,175.



Albert Goodwin, watercolour, *Tombs of the Caliphs and the Citadel, Cairo*, signed, inscribed and dated 1919, 14 x 20in, silvered frame. Hartleys, Ilkley. Oct 07. HP: £4,000. ABP: £4,705.



Albert Goodwin RWS (1845-1932), *Sunset, Blakeney, Norfolk*, oil on canvas, signed, inscribed and dated 1919, arched top frame decorated by the artist, 64 x 81.5cm. Halls Fine Art, Shrewsbury. Mar 07. HP: £10,000. ABP: £11,762.



Peter Howson, oil on canvas *Lost Friends*, signed, 36 x 42in. Great Western Auctions, Glasgow. Feb 08. HP: £4,300. ABP: £5,057.



John Bellany, oil on canvas *A Day at the Races*, signed. 24 x 20in. Great Western Auctions, Glasgow. Feb 08. HP: £2,800. ABP: £3,293.



John Byrne, mixed media *Girl with flowers*, signed Patrick, 24 x 20in. Great Western Auctions, Glasgow. Jan 07. HP: £1,300. ABP: £1,529.



Steven Campbell (1953-2007) acrylic *Target and Boy*. 12.5 x 9in. Great Western Auctions, Glasgow. Feb 08. HP: £750. ABP: £882.

The Current Art Market

by Chris Murray

There's no denying that despite the overall strength of the market, Victorians artists (including those who continued working well into the twentieth century) have been casualties of the recent interest in modern art. A glance at catalogues produced now and just five years ago clearly shows that there are far fewer Victorian works being listed and at lower estimates. But it's important to remember (as so often in this market) that it's not a straightforward situation. It's very largely the run-of-the-mill works that once formed the staple of the Victorian market - the countless uninspired Highland cattle in the mist, rose-embowered cottages, and still-lives of grapes or birds' nests that are suffering. Quality works, of whatever subject or genre, can still perform well though perhaps even here the market is not as predictable as it once was.

Considering there were two drawings in the lot, including a fine llama illustrated here, the Landseer sale (1) was not exactly poor but, given market bullishness, it could have been a little better. The same might be said of the oil by Walter Langley (2). Though a painter of typically Newlyn scenes, he was never considered part of the Newlyn School (its driving force, Stanhope Forbes, disliked and shunned him) so he has on the whole somewhat been undervalued. £5,500 is not bad for an oil, but given the attractive subject and the quality of the painting it was not unreasonable to expect more.

The George Goodwin Kilburn (3) was a good result for a fine and very Victorian watercolour of a cottage interior. Similarly, the better known Albert Goodwin, who modelled himself on Turner, has had strong results for works reflecting his two very different subjects and styles: the mystical Far Eastern fantasies (4, a watercolour), and British (often coastal) scenes: (5, an oil) reached a very strong £10,000. Interestingly, his drawings also sell well. In this area, the market has become far more discerning which is no bad thing. It focuses the mind, and of course comparatively low prices provide opportunities for collectors and investors. What goes around comes around, and the economic clouds gathering at present may force a re-evaluation of the market overall.

Among contemporary painters, Peter Howson is establishing a solid reputation, and his works continue to rise steadily (6). Only a couple of years ago such a work would have reached about £1,000. He's an interesting example of a modern artist whose works are not conventionally attractive but which are immediately recognizable: generally close-ups of what look like muscle-bound thugs living in a dark and sometimes violent dystopia. (or is it present-day Britain?) For some he's clearly an artist to watch.

Other contemporaries performing more or less as expected include such familiar figures as John Bellany (7) (also known for this distinctive heads, though of Scottish dockside girls), and John Byrne (8). By contrast, one artist who has had curiously disappointing results is Steve Campbell, who died last year at the age of only 54. He shot to fame in the 1980s, when he took New York by storm, and was a major figure in the resurgence of Scottish art, so a hammer price of £750 just a few months after the artist's death (when prices often pick up) is surprising, especially as interest in Scottish art is still keen (9). And this was not a one-off. An artist who burnt out after too rapid a rise, or an artist awaiting rediscovery? We'll see.

Other moderns include Carel Weight (10), £3,600 for a misty London landscape, even though this was not one of his characteristic works, being devoid of the anxious wraith-like figures who generally haunt his street scenes; Ethelbert White (11), a delightful

snow scenes (like his best watercolours, this has the strong rhythms more often seen in his prints); Russell Flint (12), a watercolour that is a welcome reminder that he painted subjects other than decorous erotica (though they sell for much more!); and Laura Knight (13), a wonderfully atmospheric sketch of a theatre audience.

French art has always had its discerning buyers in the UK, and continues to do quite well. There are even signs that, given our present passion for the Gallic lifestyle and second homes there, French art may be an area to keep an eye on. A possible sign of this is the price paid for a 1960s view of St. Tropez by Gabriel Deschamps (14), an artist noted for his sunny (I'm tempted to say touristy) Mediterranean views. £7,800 is a huge increase on previous results. If given a choice, I would have chosen the much earlier port view by Edmond Petitjean (15), which sold for almost a quarter of the price. Another early twentieth-century example of a typically French subject is Jules Ernest Renoux's view of a Parisian park (16).

Among nineteenth-century French works, a Harpignies watercolour of the banks of the Seine (17) reached an extraordinary £17,000. At a more affordable level, two nineteenth-century landscapes reflected the range in style and values: the Peyrol-Bonheur (18) provided a tradition pastoral scene for £2,000, the Chartrelle (19) a quiet corner of a French village for a very modest £220.

Finally, a few of the bargains. The first, to continue the French theme, was an etching by Jacques Villon (20). Though not well known here, Villon (1875–1963) was a major figure among French printmakers, and at sales that attract international interest a signed etching (depending of course on condition and subject) can fetch from £400 to well over £1,000. So £90 was a bit of a coup.

Born in America, William Mark Fisher (1841–1923) studied in Paris and then settled in Sussex, painting British, Continental and even North African subjects. His works never soar. (around £2,000 is a very good price at auction, and many can be found for under £1,000) If there are no problems regarding condition or authenticity, this charming French farm scene (21), clearly betraying the influence of the French Barbizon School, was pretty good value at £150.

Finally, a work by a young artist, a portrait by Warren Baldwin (22), a finely observed character study executed with great technical assurance. Its £90 hammer price, absurdly low, shows that it is possible to buy exceptional quality contemporary on even a very modest budget. Contemporary British art is an Aladdin's cave of good art at affordable prices.



10
Carel Weight, R.A. (1908-1997) *Albert Bridge*, oil on canvas, 51 x 61cm. *Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Sep 07. HP: £3,600. ABP: £4,234.*



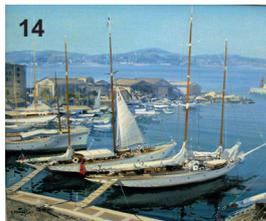
11
Ethelbert White (1891-1972) *Hampstead Grove Under Snow*, signed bottom right, oil on canvas, 50.5 x 60.5cm, unframed. *Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £420. ABP: £494.*



12
Sir William Russell Flint (1880-1969) *watercolour, 'St Owens Bay, Jersey, Corbiere Lighthouse & La Rocco Tower'*, signed, titled verso, 7.5 x 11in. *Gorrings, Lewes. Dec 07. HP: £2,000. ABP: £2,352.*



13
Dame Laura Knight (1877-1970) *charcoal, 'Aux Folliès Bergeres'*, signed and dated 1932, 6.75 x 10.25in. *Gorrings, Lewes. Dec 07. HP: £1,200. ABP: £1,411.*



14
Gabriel Deschamps: *'St. Tropez' harbour*, oil on canvas, Stacey Marks label on reverse dated September 69, signed, 21.5 x 26in. *Ewbank Auctioneers, Send, Surrey. Dec 06. HP: £7,800. ABP: £9,174.*

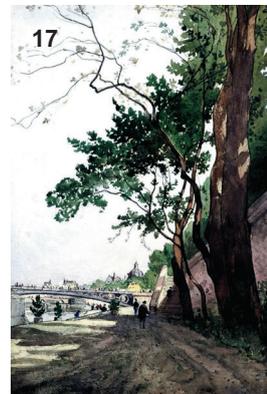


15
Edmond Petitjean (1844-1925) *oil on board, 'L'Entree du Port'*, signed, 16 x 22in. *Gorrings, Lewes. Oct 07. HP: £2,000. ABP: £2,352.*



16
Jules Ernest Renoux (1863-1932) *oil on canvas, 'Avenue de Bois de Boulogne, Printemps 1911' No.68*, 13 x 16in. *Gorrings, Lewes. Oct 07. HP: £1,400. ABP: £1,646.*

Prices quoted are actual hammer prices (HP) and the Approximate Buyer's Price. (ABP) Includes an average premium of 15% + VAT. This is only a sample from 1000s of results from recent sales. Gold Services subscribers can view an extensive selection at www.antiques-info.co.uk or to subscribe to our Gold Services see pages 4 & 5.



17
H Harpignies, *watercolour, 'The Seine at Paris'*, signed and dated '88, 21 x 14.5in, gilt frame, label for the Fine Art Society dated 1959. *Hartleys, Ilkley. Feb 07. HP: £17,000. ABP: £19,996.*



18
J Peyrol-Bonheur (1830-1891) *pastoral scene*, oil. *Richard Winterton, Burton on Trent. Jul 07. HP: £2,000. ABP: £2,352.*



19
L. Chartrelle (19thC French), *'L'Grerolles (Cote D'Or)'*, Empty street scene, hens to foreground, canvas 8.75 x 10.5in, signed/inscribed on stretcher, gilt moulded, swept frame. *Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent. Feb 06. HP: £220. ABP: £258.*



20
Jacques Villon (1875-1963) *etching of a standing female nude*, signed and numbered 3/15 in pencil, 8 x 5.25in. *Great Western Auctions, Glasgow. Feb 08. HP: £90. ABP: £105.*



21
William Mark Fisher (1841-1923) *oil, French pastoral landscape with cattle and trees outside a farmhouse*, relined canvas 15 x 21in, signed in black 'Mark Fisher', unframed. *Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent. Jun 07. HP: £150. ABP: £176.*



22
Warren Baldwin b.1950, *Head MCMXCVII Wilhelmine Croonberghs*, 1998, acrylic on paper, bears submission label for the Royal Academy of Arts Summer Exhibition 1998 attached to the reverse, 35 x 24.5cm. *Rosebery's, London. Jan 08. HP: £90. ABP: £105.*